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THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI.

MASTER OF KUNG FU

**MYSTERY!
INTRIGUE!
KUNG FU
ACTION!
THIS ONE'S
GOT IT ALL!
"A CITY
ASEA!"**



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TM

GENE
DAY '81



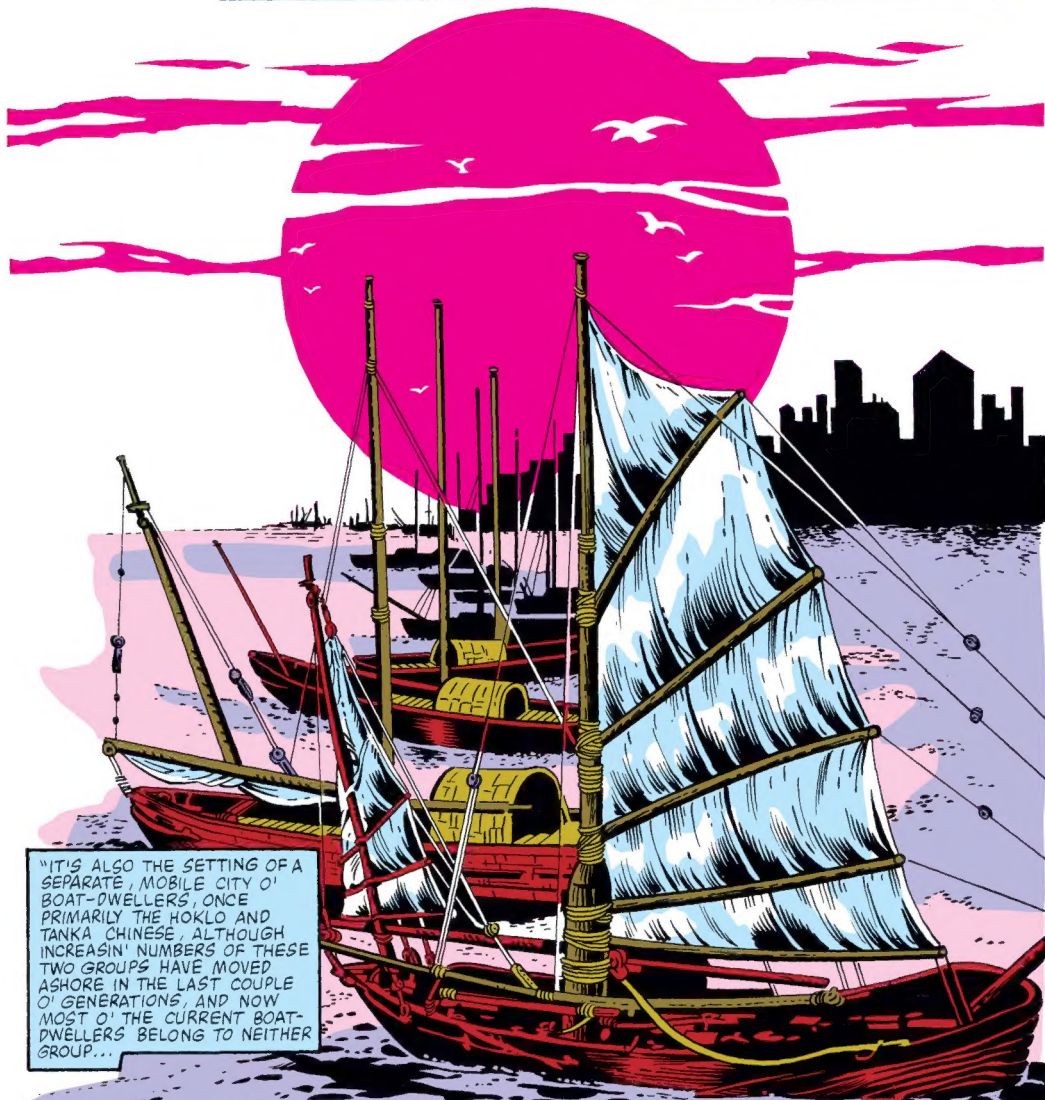
"Call me Shang-Chi, as my **father** did, when he raised me in the vacuum of his Honan, China retreat. I learned many things from my father: that my name means 'The Rising and Advancing of a Spirit,' and that my body could be forged into a living weapon through the discipline of kung fu. Since then, I have learned that my father is **Dr. Fu Manchu**, the most insidiously evil man on Earth... and that to **honor** him would bring nothing but **dishonor** to the spirit of my **name**."

Stan Lee PRESENTS: **MASTER OF KUNG FU!**®

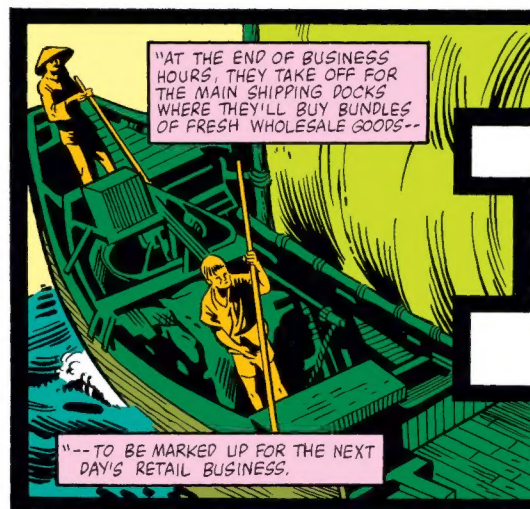
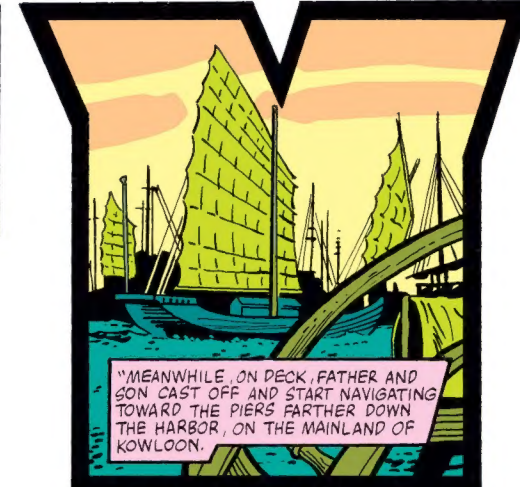
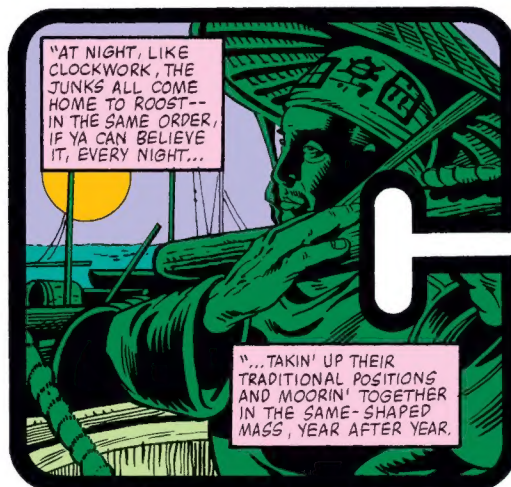
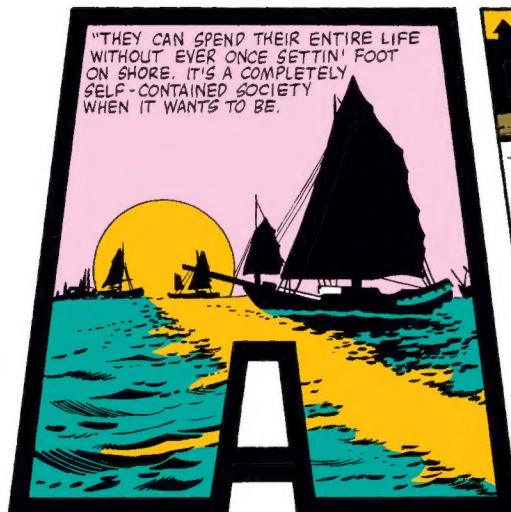
Featuring supporting characters created by SAX ROHMER

"HONG KONG,
NEAR SUNSET..."

"YOU'RE LOOKIN' AT ONE OF THE WORLD'S BEST NATURAL HARBORS AND BLOODY WELL THE BUSIEST-- CHINA'S 'SOUTH GATE', THE LINK BETWEEN EAST AND WEST. IT'S A BRITISH CROWN COLONY UNTIL 1997, TOLERATED BY THE COMMUNIST CHINESE TILL THEN BECAUSE IT **PROVIDES** THAT VITAL LINK WITH THE WEST IN A FACE-SAVING WAY."



DOUG MOENCH / GENE DAY / JIM NOVAK / BOB SHAREN / JIM SALICRUP / JIM SHOOTER
WRITER / ARTIST / LETTERER / COLORIST / EDITOR / EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



"THE TWILIGHT DEEPENS NOW,
AS BLACK JACK TARR ENDS
HIS LECTURE..."

THEY'RE HAPPY ENOUGH LIKE
THAT, BUT IT'S A POOR LIFE--SO
YA CAN SEE WHY THEY MIGHT BE
WILLIN' TO CLOSE THEIR EYES
TO THE CONSEQUENCES OF A
STRAIGHT CASH DEAL...

...AN' IT LOOKS
LIKE THAT'S JUST
WHAT THEY'VE BLOODY
WELL DONE...

... CUZ NOT ONE O'
THOSE JUNKS OUT
THERE HAS SO MUCH
AS **BUDGED**
DURIN' THE LAST
TWO DAYS--

--COMPLETELY
BYPASSIN'
THEIR NORMAL
ROUTINES.

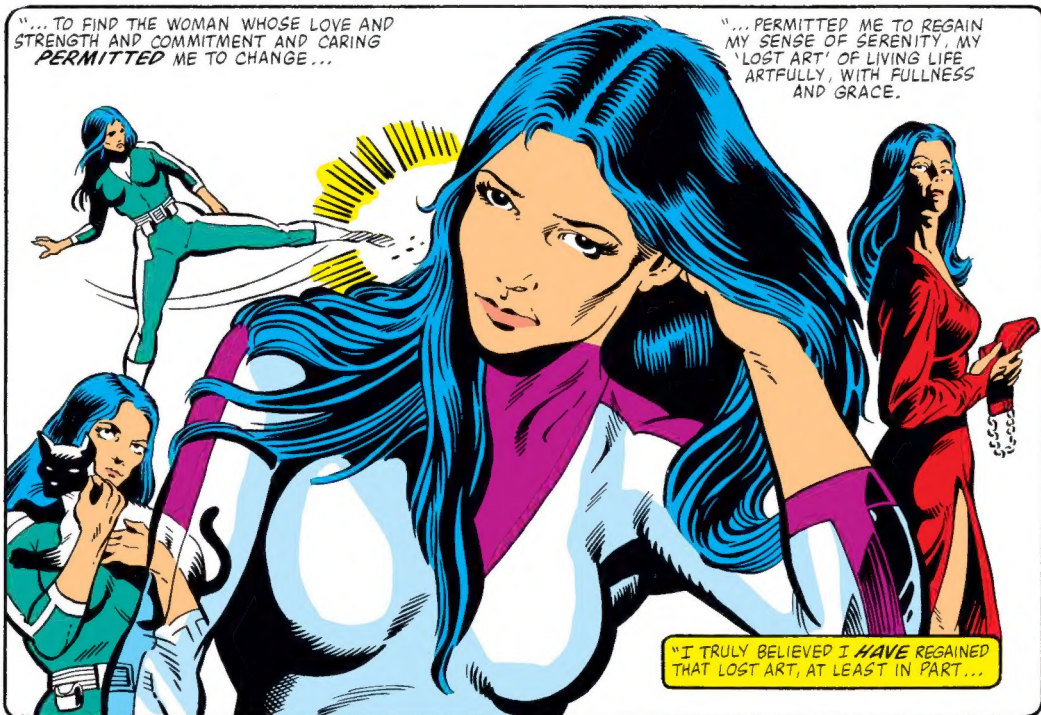
AN' UNDER NORMAL CIRCUM-
STANCES, CHINAMAN, NOT A
SINGLE ONE O' THOSE
FAMILIES COULD AFFORD
TO LOSE EVEN **ONE**
DAY'S TRADE.

"MY COMPANION SIGHS
HEAVILY, AS IF-- EVEN
AFTER SO MANY YEARS
OF DEALING WITH THE
WAYS OF THE WORLD--

"--HE STILL RETAINS
A CAPACITY FOR
DISILLUSIONMENT.

IN FACT, MI-6'S HONG KONG
BRANCH IS PRETTY SURE THE
FAMILIES HAVE MOVED **ASHORE**.
TURNIN' THEIR JUNKS OVER
TO AN UNKNOWN PARTY
OR PARTIES...

--SO THERE'S NO TELLIN' WHO--
OR WHAT-- IS NOW LURKIN' ON
THOSE BLOODY SILENT BOATS.





LEIKO WU...?

YES. MY NAME IS SHANG-CHI-- I WAS TO MEET HER HERE. SHE IS BEING DISCHARGED TODAY.

YES... BUT ACCORDING TO OUR RECORDS--

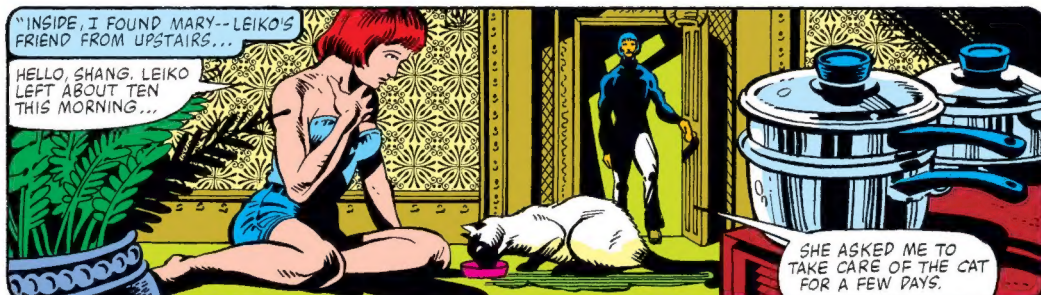


--MISS WU ALREADY CHECKED OUT, AT NINE THIS MORNING.

"SHE *KNEW* I WAS TO MEET HER IN THE *AFTERNOON*..."

"IT MADE NO SENSE."

"I WENT TO HER FLAT IN SOHO."



"INSIDE, I FOUND MARY-- LEIKO'S FRIEND FROM UPSTAIRS..."

HELLO, SHANG. LEIKO LEFT ABOUT TEN THIS MORNING...

SHE ASKED ME TO TAKE CARE OF THE CAT FOR A FEW DAYS.



SAID SHE WAS GOING TO SEE BLACK JACK TARR IN HIS ROOM AT THE SAVOY.

I... SEE.



"IT WAS SWIFT."

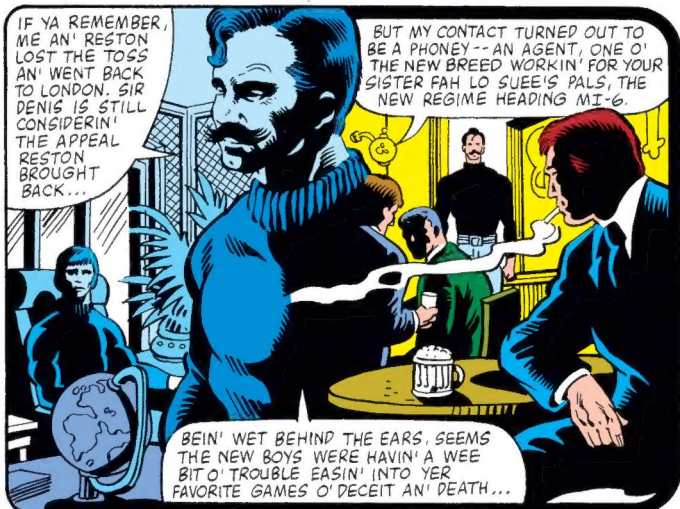


WHAT THE -- ? I'VE NEVER SEEN THE CAT STRIKE OUT AT YOU BEFORE...!



HE NEVER HAS...

UNTIL NOW.





SO YOU TOLD HER THE TIME, PLACE, AND CODE-WORDS.

LOOK, CHINAMAN, SHE'S GOT A RIGHT TO LIVE HER OWN LIFE WITHOUT YOU EITHER HOGGIN' THE SPOTLIGHT OR BREATHIN' DOWN HER NECK EVERY STEP O' THE WAY.

TRUE.

BESIDES, I TOLD HER IF SHE WENT TO HONG KONG SHE'D NEED A BACK-UP, LEADIN' HER TO BELIEVE IT WOULD BE ME ALONE...

... BUT I WAS PLANNIN' ALL ALONG TO BRING YOU TOO.

I SEE. SO--ARE YA READY TO GO?

YES.

THEN LET'S GO. THE CODE-WORDS ARE "TRIUMPH BY '43" AND THE PLACE IS --

THERE, CHINAMAN-- THAT JUNK WITH THE THREE RED STREAMERS FLYIN' FROM ITS MAST. WE'LL HAVE TO CROSS THESE HALF-DOZEN OTHER JUNKS TO GET TO IT.

"THE MOON HAS REPLACED THE SUN, DRESSING HONG KONG HARBOR IN SHADOWS..."

ORDINARILY THIS'D BE NO PROBLEM, SINCE THE BOAT COMMUNITY IS JUST LIKE A SEPARATE CITY ON THE WATER...

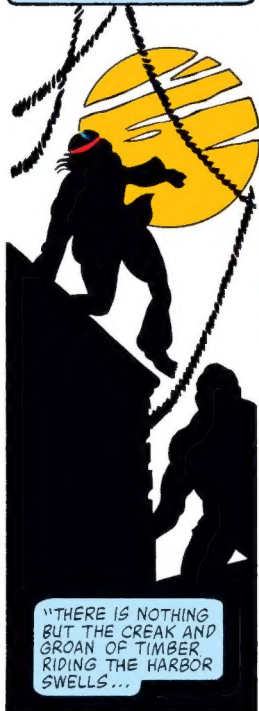
EACH JUNK IS COMMONLY USED LIKE A PIECE O' MOVABLE SIDEWALK TO GET TO THE OTHERS --

-- BUT WITH NEW TENANTS POSSIBLY ABOARD...

... WE'D BEST PLAY IT SAFE AND *SNEAK*.

"AND SO, WE DON THE SHADOWS OURSELVES..."

"THE DARKNESS SERVES US WELL FOR A TIME."



"THERE IS NOTHING BUT THE CREAK AND GROAN OF TIMBER RIDING THE HARBOR SWELLS..."

"BUT AS WE MOVE ONTO THE FIFTH BOAT--"



HAH!!
INTRUDERS!
INTRUD--



--GUHH!!

GOTTA TAKE HIM OUT FAST AN' QUIET, CHINA-MAN!

DON'T WANNA RISK THE SOUND OF GUNSHOTS!



"NOR WOULD I WANT TARR TO INFLICT THE EFFECT OF GUNSHOTS..."

"BUT IT IS ALREADY TOO LATE FOR SILENCE."



"THE MAN'S SHOUTED ALARM HAS ALREADY BROUGHT OTHERS SWARMING..."



"AND SO WE MUST NOW FIGHT OUR WAY ACROSS THE DECKS..."



"...MOVING FROM ONE JUNK TO ANOTHER..."



"...UNTIL WE REACH THE MAST FLYING THE THREE RED STREAMERS..."

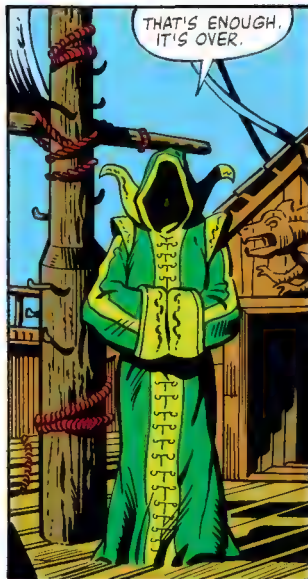
"GOOD. TARR SUBDUES THE LAST OF THEM..."



"IT IS OVER, THE SHADOWS
SURRENDER NO MORE
NAKED VIOLENCE..."



STILL DON'T WANNA FIRE IT, BUT
I **GOTTA** USE THE GUN NOW--
TO COVER THESE THUGS IN
CASE THEY REVIVE...



THAT'S ENOUGH.
IT'S OVER.



WHAT THE--?! AND WHO
THE BLOODY DEVIL ARE
YOU ?!

THE CONTACT.

YEAH ? WELL, I DON'T KNOW
ABOUT "TRIUMPH BY '43"-- BUT THE
CALIBRE OF THIS GUN IS A NOTCH
HIGHER THAN .43. INSIDE THE
CABIN -- MOVE.

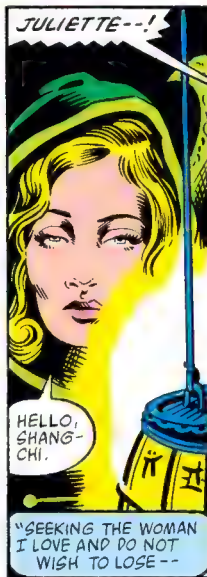


"THE FIGURE
DESCENDS TILTING
STAIRS..."

"...AND THERE IS A VOICE IN THE SWAY AND
SUPPLENESS OF ROBED MOVEMENT,
SPEAKING THE WORD **WOMAN**."



"YES... THE
FIGURE IS--"



JULIETTE--!

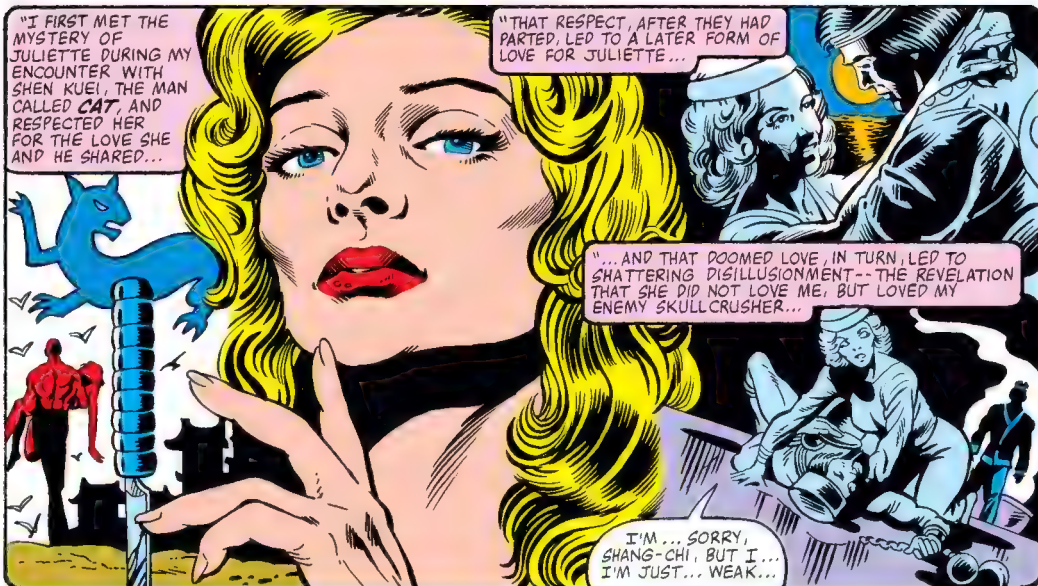
HELLO,
SHANG-
CHI.

"SEEKING THE WOMAN
I LOVE AND DO NOT
WISH TO LOSE--"



"--I HAVE FOUND
INSTEAD THE WOMAN I
ONCE **THOUGHT** I
LOVED..."

"...AND WHOM I LOST
TO AN **ENEMY**..."



"I FIRST MET THE MYSTERY OF JULIETTE DURING MY ENCOUNTER WITH SHEN KUEI, THE MAN CALLED CAT, AND RESPECTED HER FOR THE LOVE SHE AND HE SHARED...

"THAT RESPECT, AFTER THEY HAD PARTED, LED TO A LATER FORM OF LOVE FOR JULIETTE...

"...AND THAT DOOMED LOVE, IN TURN, LED TO SHATTERING DISILLUSIONMENT-- THE REVELATION THAT SHE DID NOT LOVE ME, BUT LOVED MY ENEMY SKULLCRUSHER..."

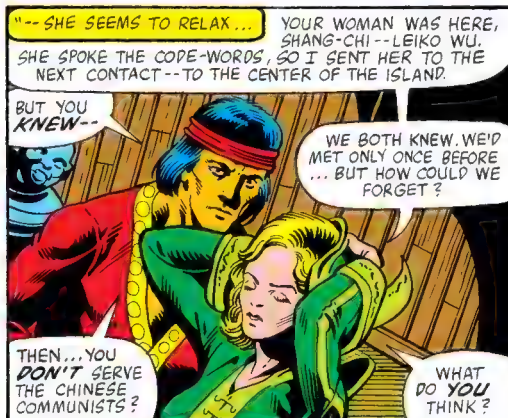
I'M... SORRY, SHANG-CHI, BUT I... I'M JUST... WEAK...



"AND NOW..."

UH... I'LL LEAVE YOU TWO ALONE, CHINAMAN-- WAIT OUTSIDE AND GUARD THE THUGS.

"AS TARR EXITS--



"-- SHE SEEMS TO RELAX..."

YOUR WOMAN WAS HERE, SHANG-CHI--LEIKO WU. SHE SPOKE THE COPE-WORDS, SO I SENT HER TO THE NEXT CONTACT--TO THE CENTER OF THE ISLAND.

BUT YOU *RNEW--*

WE BOTH KNEW. WE'D MET ONLY ONCE BEFORE... BUT HOW COULD WE FORGET?

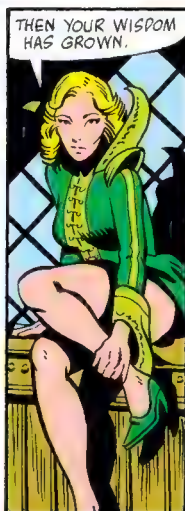
THEN... YOU *DON'T* SERVE THE CHINESE COMMUNISTS?

WHAT DO *YOU* THINK?



I THINK... YOU COULD NEVER CHOOSE BETWEEN THE EAST AND WEST. I THINK YOU COULD SERVE *NO* COUNTRY... ONLY A MAN, ONLY YOUR HEART...

...AS YOU CONTINUE YOUR SEARCH FOR... BEWITCHED NIGHTS.



THEN YOUR WISDOM HAS GROWN.



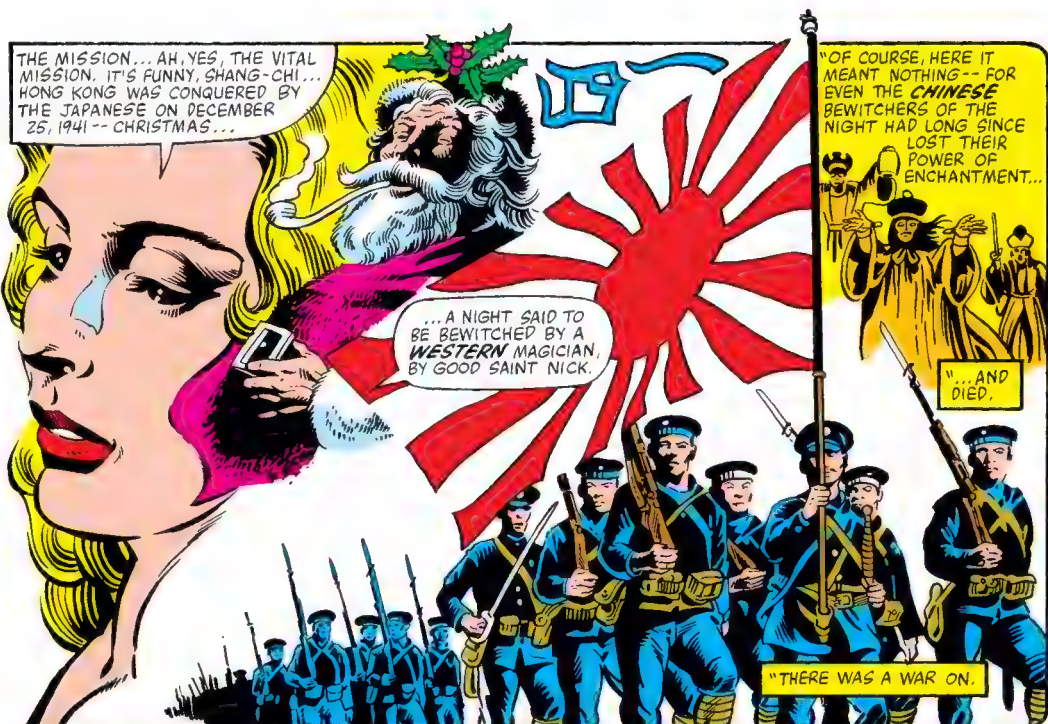
AND THE MAN? SKULLCRUSHER--?



NO. I TOLD YOU... I WAS WEAK THEN. THE NIGHTS ARE STILL SELDOM FILLED WITH THE OLD MAGIC, SHANG-CHI, BUT I HAVE REGAINED *SOME* OF MY STRENGTH.



THEN WHOM *DO* YOU SERVE IN THIS MATTER... THIS MISSION?



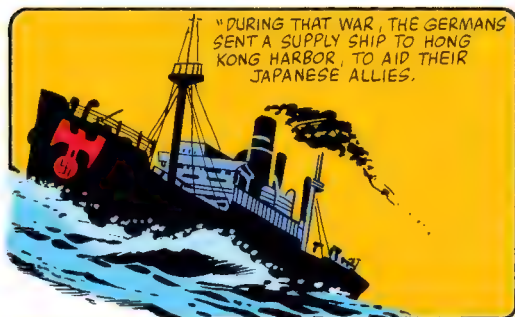
THE MISSION... AH, YES, THE VITAL MISSION. IT'S FUNNY, SHANG-CHI... HONG KONG WAS CONQUERED BY THE JAPANESE ON DECEMBER 25, 1941 -- CHRISTMAS...

...A NIGHT SAID TO BE BEWITCHED BY A WESTERN MAGICIAN, BY GOOD SAINT NICK.

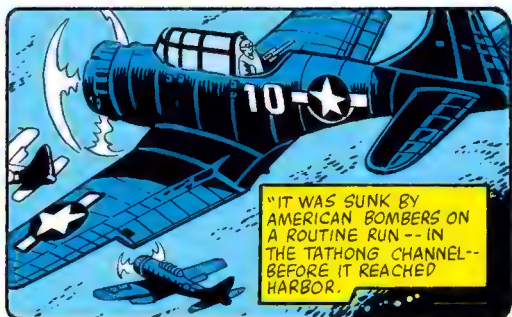
"OF COURSE, HERE IT MEANT NOTHING-- FOR EVEN THE CHINESE BEWITCHERS OF THE NIGHT HAD LONG SINCE LOST THEIR POWER OF ENCHANTMENT...

"...AND DIED.

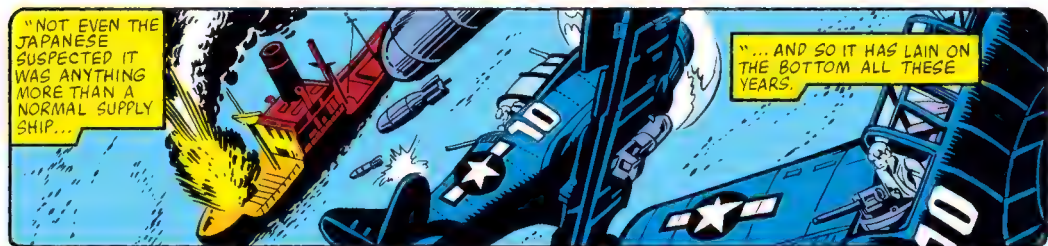
"THERE WAS A WAR ON.



"DURING THAT WAR, THE GERMANS SENT A SUPPLY SHIP TO HONG KONG HARBOR TO AID THEIR JAPANESE ALLIES.

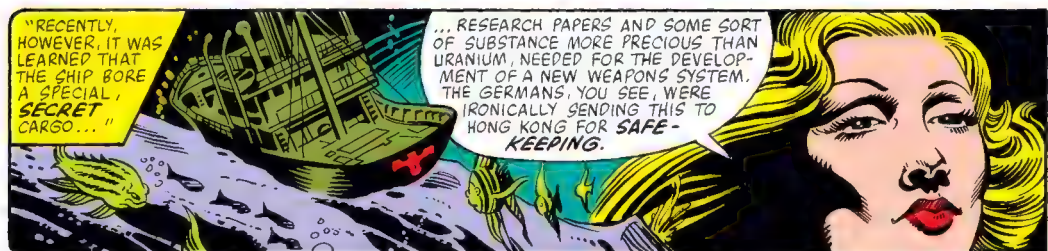


"IT WAS SUNK BY AMERICAN BOMBERS ON A ROUTINE RUN -- IN THE TATHONG CHANNEL-- BEFORE IT REACHED HARBOR.



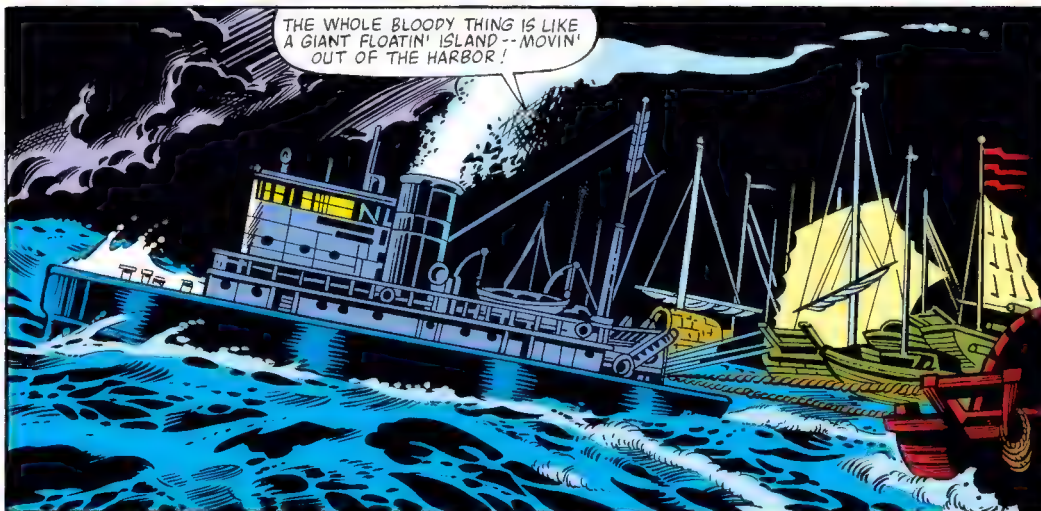
"NOT EVEN THE JAPANESE SUSPECTED IT WAS ANYTHING MORE THAN A NORMAL SUPPLY SHIP...

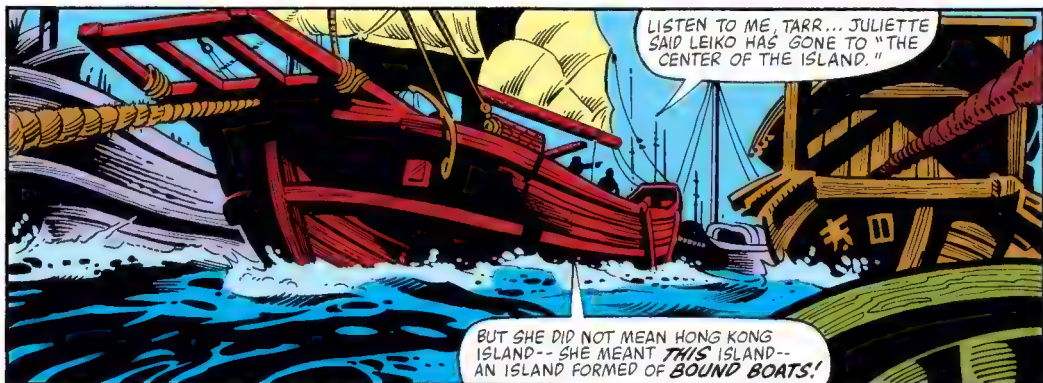
"...AND SO IT HAS LAIN ON THE BOTTOM ALL THESE YEARS.



"RECENTLY, HOWEVER, IT WAS LEARNED THAT THE SHIP BORE A SPECIAL, SECRET CARGO..."

...RESEARCH PAPERS AND SOME SORT OF SUBSTANCE MORE PRECIOUS THAN URANIUM, NEEDED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW WEAPONS SYSTEM. THE GERMANS, YOU SEE, WERE IRONICALLY SENDING THIS TO HONG KONG FOR SAFE-KEEPING.





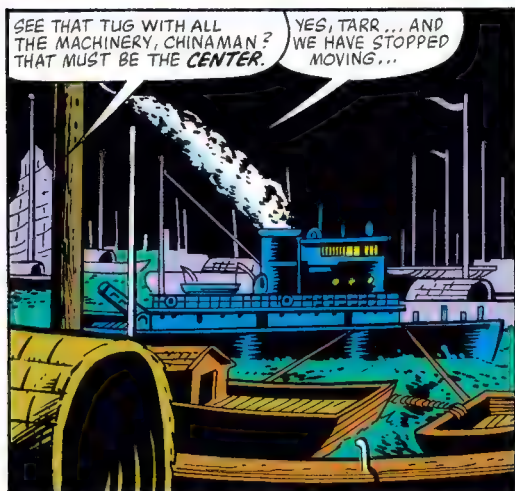




NICE MOVES, CHINAMAN -- LIKE BLOODY LIGHTNIN' YOU ARE, BUT NOW -- WHAT-
EVER *IS* AT THE CENTER OF THIS
FLOATIN' ISLAND...

... IT LOOKS LIKE ALL THE SURROUNDIN'
JUNKS ARE BENT ON PROVIDIN' A PROTECTIVE
BUFFER FOR IT -- AND THEY MEAN BUSINESS,
THE STINKIN' HEATHENS!

SAY...
LOOK
OUT
THERE...



SEE THAT TUG WITH ALL
THE MACHINERY, CHINAMAN? THAT MUST BE THE *CENTER*.

YES, TARR... AND
WE HAVE STOPPED
MOVING...



LOOK... SKINDIVERS JUMPIN'
FROM ALL THE JUNKS! BUT
WHAT THE DEVIL ARE THEY
GOIN' DOWN FOR -- ?



A *SHIP*, TARR, SUNK DURING THE
SECOND WORLD WAR.

WHAAAT?

IN
HERE...

BRATCH

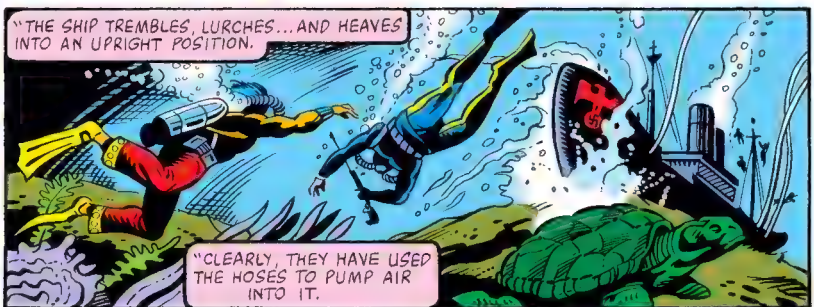
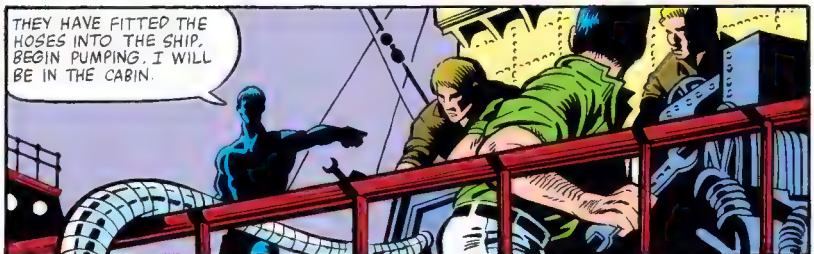
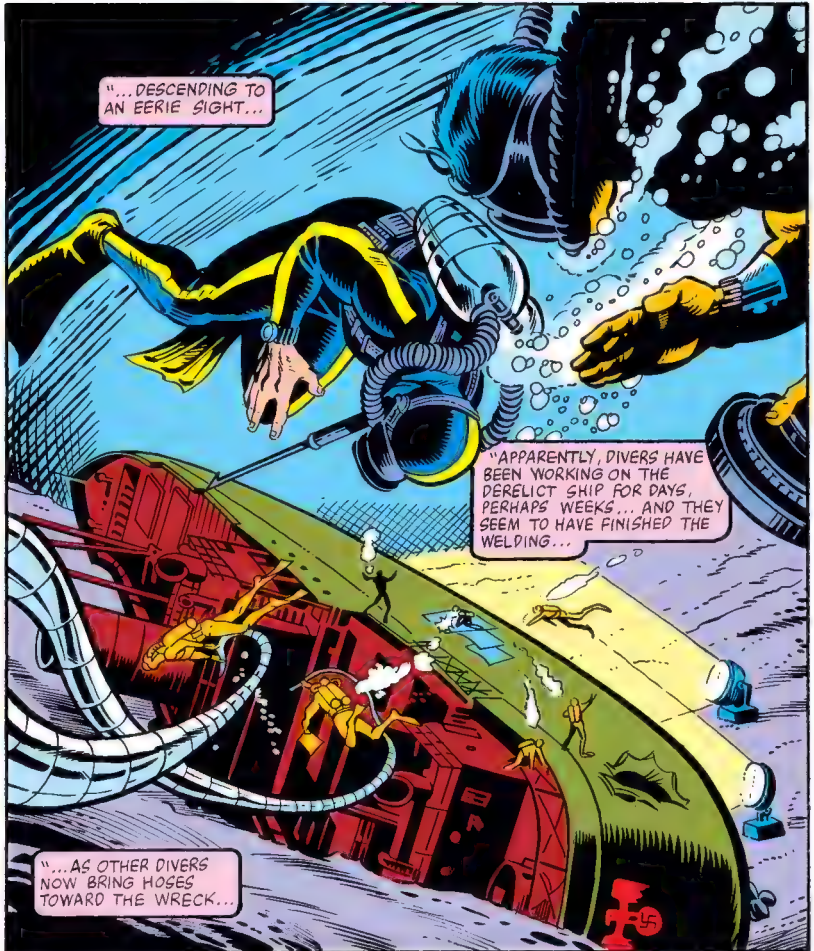
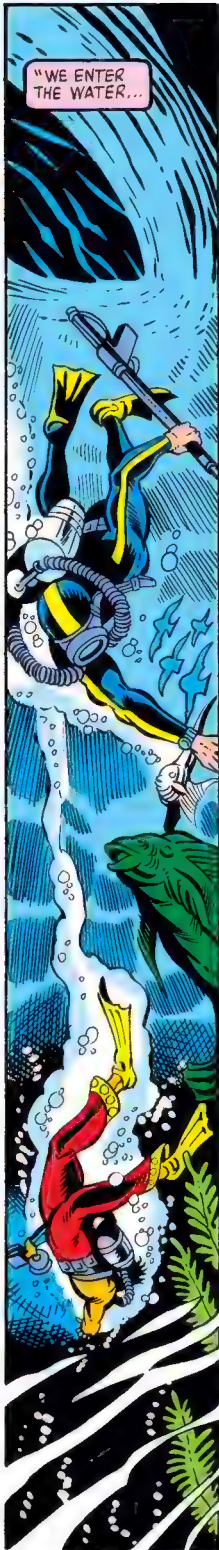


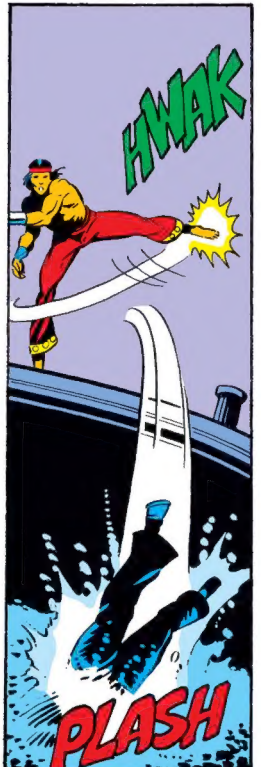
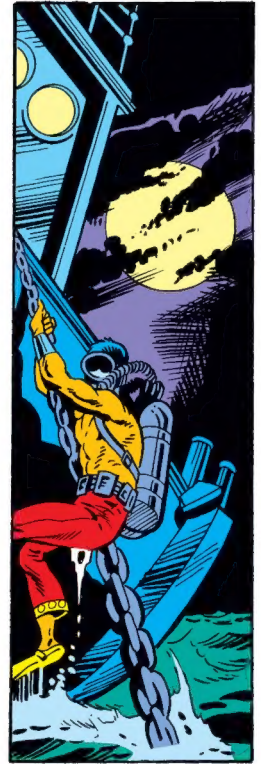
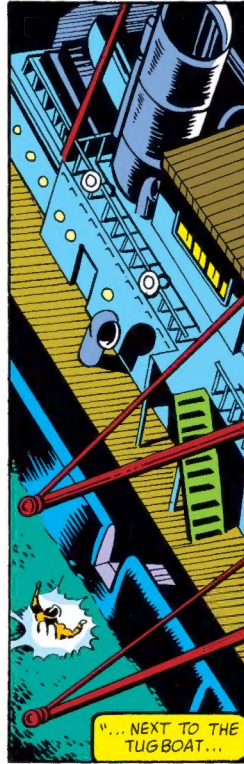
PUT ON ONE OF THE SCUBA
OUTFITS, TARR, AND YOU
WILL *SEE*...



ALSO, WE CAN NOW REACH THE
CENTER TUGBOAT QUICKER
AND WITH FEWER FIGHTS.

YEAH -- BY GOIN' RIGHT
UNDER THIS BLOODY FLOATIN'
CITY -- BY WET *SUBWAY*.







"LUCK-- THERE WAS ONLY ONE OF THEM."



"AND NOW, BEFORE I AM SIGHTED BY ANYONE ELSE, I MUST REACH THE TUGBOAT'S CABIN..."



"...AND SEARCH FOR--"



"LEIKO!-- DRESSED IN FINE SILK AND SURROUNDED BY PILLOWS!"

"SHOULD I CALL OUT TO HER, OR--"



"NO-- A MAN STEPS INTO VIEW..."

I HAVE TOLD YOU THAT I ONCE LOVED ANOTHER, AND THAT IT WAS THE GREATEST LOVE I HAVE EVER KNOWN...



NOW, THOUGH SHE STILL SERVES ME... SHE REFUSES TO RETURN MY LOVE. SO... WHEN THIS IS OVER... PERHAPS YOU AND I--

YES...

"AND LEIKO RISES TOWARD HIM, TO--"



WHAT--? THE BOAT-- IT'S MOVING! WHAT'S HAPPENING--?!



"FROM MY POSITION OUTSIDE, I CAN SEE WHAT IS HAPPENING. IT IS EXACTLY WHAT I EXPECTED, AND YET..."

"...IT IS... INCREDIBLE."

"THE ANCIENT SHIP HAS BEEN
RAISED FROM ITS GRAVE..."

"...AND EVERYTHING IN ITS
PATH--A LARGE PORTION OF
THE FLOATING ISLAND--IS
SHATTERED AND SCATTERED..."

"...USHERED RUDELY
TO *NEW* GRAVES IN
THE SEA..."



"AND TARR--!
WHAT OF HIM--?"



YOU FOOLS! YOU PUMPED THE AIR INTO IT TOO FAST! WE WERE NOT YET IN PROPER POSITION--!

BUT... BUT WE--



SILENCE! THE DAMAGE IS DONE! PREPARE YOURSELVES TO BOARD THE SHIP AND SEARCH FOR THE CARGO!

IT IS ALL RIGHT, LEIKO-- JUST A FEW RUINED JUNKS-- BUT THE MEN CAN SWIM, AND AT LEAST THE SHIP IS AFLOAT AGAIN.



"THE MAN--! ONCE AGAIN HE HAS CHANGED LOVERS, MUCH AS OTHER MEN CHANGE CLOTHES... FROM JULIETTE TO PAVANE... AND NOW, TO ANOTHER. HE IS--



SHEN KUEI!

--THE MAN CALLED CAT.



SO, BRITISHER... EVER SINCE OUR FIGHT WHICH ENDED WITHOUT AN ENDING... WE KNEW, DID WE NOT--



--THAT IT WOULD COME TO THIS... ?

"NO... NOT THIS..."



"... NOT WITH THE LOST ART OF SERENITY SO RECENTLY REGAINED... NOW SHATTERED BY THE LOOK IN LEIKO'S EYES..."

"... THE TASTE STILL UPON HER LIPS..."

CONTINUED
NEXT ISSUE:
IN THE
GREATEST
MARTIAL ARTS
CONTEST OF
THE DECADE--

**FIGHT
WITHOUT
REASON!**